

Dendrobiums



Dendrobium Dawn Maree 'Orchis'

There are around 900 Dendrobium species distributed throughout India, S.E. Asia, China, Japan, Malaya, the Philippines, New Guinea, Australia and New Zealand. Many are epiphytic but there are some lithophytes or terrestrial plants too. These orchids need to be grown according to conditions they enjoy in their natural habitat.

Water: All plants require plenty of water and good light while growing. When growth stops the deciduous type of orchids should then have a cooler drier period to ensure flowering, while the plants which retain their leaves should be kept moist during the year and will need more shade than the other types. In all cases enough water should be given to prevent the pseudobulbs from shrivelling. If nobile orchids are watered too often in winter buds will not flower but turn into small plants i.e. kiekies.

Temperature: This depends entirely on where the plant originates. If from a high area like the Himalayas e.g. Dendrobium Nobile then it will require temperature of:

Winter around 50°F (10°C) - 60°F (15°C)
Summer around 59°F (15°C) - 86°F (30°C)

If the plant has flowers where come on an inflorescence emerging from the top two leaves and resemble the flowers of the Phalaenopsis, they will require a warmer temperature. Flowers coming from all up the stems are the nobile type of Dendrobium. The warmer type require a temp of around:

65°F (18°C) - 88°F (31°C)

Feed: The general rule is to feed well during spring, summer and autumn with a good balanced orchid fertilizer but see the other article by Janet Plested of Plested Orchid Nursery.

Containers: This will depend on the type of orchid. Those with tall reed-like spikes and Phalaenopsis type will do well in pots while those of pendulous habit will do better in baskets or mounted on cork.

Our society orchid website can be found here:

<http://www.cardiffandthevaleorchidsociety.co.uk/>

